The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 1927 No. 3236

Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 29
EDITORIALS:
When Is a Ship Not a Ship? 31
Ambassador Houghton Tells Some More Truths 32
The Scandal at Geneva 33
The Wisdom of Herbert Brown 33
MURDER BY "PERSONS UNKNOWN." By Gaetano Salvemini 34
FRENZIED RAILROAD FINANCE. By Marshall Lynn 35
HONOR IS A TRADITION OF THE SEA. By Frank Chaloner Ames 37
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 38
CORRESPONDENCE 39
BOOKS:
Carbolic Acid for India. By W. Norman Brown 40
"Old Charlie." By J. Frank Dobie 41
Hamsun's Rival. By Walter Vogdes 41
Government for Workers. By Theresa Wolfson 42
Fifty Years Behind. By Keith Hutchison 42
Before the War. By Herbert Solow 43
Books in Brief 43
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION:
The Eastern Edge of Europe. By Louis E. Van Norman 44

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States and Mexico; to Canada, $5.50; and to foreign countries of the Postal Union, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City. Cable Address: NATION, New York. British Agent of Subscriptions and Advertising: Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 13, Woburn Square, London, W. C. 1, England.

THE NATION is on file in most public and college libraries and is indexed in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.*

GALLANT ALL THE WAY THROUGH was Byrd's effort to reach Paris—just as gallant as was to be expected of the man who flew over the North Pole and has been so modest and unassuming about it all. The whole country thrilled when the news came that he and his associates were safe after that fearful night of flying all over northern France in search of a haven. To those who listened to the radio and got the press cables from Le Bourget that episode must surely remain unforgetable. Talk about Jules Verne or Victor Hugo or Dumas or Wells or any other writer! Here was an epic situation indeed: Four men aloft in a terrific storm, over their destination but unable to see or find it. Then their wireless getting fainter and fainter and finally disappearing altogether while the storms grew worse and the darkness blacker than ever. Finally complete silence ordered upon the spirits of the air, all radio and wireless talk stopped while one station clicked its despairing WTW, WTW call for the ship missing in the ether, missing and fighting the evilest elements, missing, missing, silent—vanished, until the word suddenly comes that back on the coast in the English Channel it has dropped to the water, and that Byrd and his crew are safe. What must have been the sensation of those four men as they watched the gasoline grow less and less? For them those precious disappearing drops were the sands of life running out. "Byrd has three more hours of gasoline"—"two more hours of gasoline"—"one more hour of gasoline"—*safe!* Who can measure the joy that flash gave to millions of his and his associates' happy countrymen?

BETWEEN AIR RECEPTIONS Paris celebrates prison escapes. Recently, it will be recalled, the Government, in its impartial way, decided to send a Communist and a royalist to jail. As royalist it selected Leon Daudet, leader of the royalist rowdies known as the *camelots de roi.* These gentlemen love street fights but they also have Mr. Upton Sinclair's passion for making a monkey of the law. They studied telephone switchboards with that end in view; in particular they studied the switchboard of the French Ministry of Justice. Then they telephoned instructions to the prison to release M. Semard and M. Daudet, and so crossed the wires that a return call from the prison, instead of reaching the Ministry, reached one of their own agents. Yes, the royalist telephone operator assured the prison warden, the instructions were genuine; and M. Daudet and M. Semard were accordingly released. M. Semard remained to constitute a problem; he had been officially released, and how could he be rearrested? M. Daudet gloriously disappeared. He has been reported in Spain, in Switzerland, and cruising in the English Channel; wherever he is, he is doubtless enjoying life and cursing when Commander Byrd absorbs the newspaper space on which for two weeks he has had a mortgage. The Government has sought to retrieve its dignity by arresting a royalist telephone operator—which really does not get it very far. What with Lindbergh and Daudet and Byrd, Paris bids fair to exhaust its capacity for excitement before the American Legion arrives in September. What a pity that would be!

EVEN A KING HAS USES now and then. The Die-hard effort to "reform" the British House of Lords by copper-riveting its Tory majority forever stirred up such a storm of protest even among some of the younger Tory peers (who seem to have caught up with the eighteenth century at least), that the elders of the party looked about for avenues of escape. It clearly would not do to have Tory lords on the war-path against the Tory program for revising the Lords. But Viscount Cave had offered the proposal in the name of the Government. Clearly, it was a difficult situation. Then someone remembered the King. Ah, yes, the King. The Cave proposal took away the royal prerogative of naming new peers by the hundred if he (or the party in power which dictates his actions) wanted to. Suddenly the Tories were filled with solicitude for the royal prerogatives. The powers of the King must not be limited, not even to reform the House of Lords. And so the House of Lords stands unreformed—not, according to the official version, because the proposed "reform" was violently out of temper with the twentieth century, but because it clipped the privileges of the King. It was a beautiful example of the British talent for graceful self-deception—and equally graceful retreats.

RUSSIA IS HAVING A HOT and exciting summer. War specters rise to haunt her from every angle. The raid on the Soviet Legation in Peking; the high jinks in London and the official break with Great Britain; the murder of Russia's envoy to Poland, and the consequent war scares, with the revelation of tense nerves exhibited in the

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execution of a score of "counter-revolutionaries" charged with being in Britain's secret spy service—these have been followed by a sensational statement made by the Communist Party of Poland, which declares that the Polish war factories are working night shifts and that the reservists are being hastily trained for the coming war with Russia. Moscow is, not unnaturally, worried. There is no doubt that Tory Britain, faced with the real threat to her Asiatic empire caused by Russia's moral—and occasionally more than moral—support of Nationalist movements in that continent, is angry; and an angry Britain is dangerous. We do not for a moment suppose that Britain contemplates a new war with Russia; but it is obvious that she has launched upon a policy of pin-pricking Russia wherever opportunity offers, and the result cannot be anything but a constant war psychology.

WHAT IS THIS "CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION" which Mr. Coolidge foresees for the Philippines? If it means doing away with the cavalry kitchen cabinet which has surrounded General Wood, that will be an advance in the right direction; but if it points toward reducing the Philippines to the status of a sort of territory or territory-to-be, it would be no gain at all. We have promised the Philippines independence—indeed, a nation with our American tradition could not do otherwise; we will be in constant hot water until we redeem our pledges—and even after that, we may find the consequences of our adventure in imperialism dogging our national trail. There are signs that Mr. Coolidge, who dislikes trouble, is moving to clear up some of the worst spots in our foreign relations. The New York *Times* reports him inclined to recognize the Nationalists in China and to assume the lead in positive friendly action toward that country. Furthermore, the President is reported to be willing to accept a quiet resignation from Mr. Sheffield, United States Ambassador to Mexico. Mr. Sheffield is one of those civilian envoys who thinks an American diplomat in Latin America should act like an army officer training a squad of raw rookies.

WE CONFESS TO A BIT OF UNHOLY GLEE at the demonstration in Los Angeles that patriotism is still the last refuge of some scoundrels. The Better America Federation of California has been one of the very worst of the 100-per-cent-patriotic organizations bent on pursuing all radicals, yes, even mild liberals, in fact any one who did not agree with them at all points. They had their share in enacting the infamous Syndicalism Law under which men were liable and some were sent to jail for fourteen years merely for membership in the I. W. W. or the Communist Party. The "Better America" in the federation's name spelt a tyranny by this organization over workers and workers' organizations, teachers, and dissenters of every variety, avowedly for the improvement of the country, but in reality for increasing the stranglehold of big business upon the community life and—in the interest of the open shop—of the poisonous molding of the entire life of Southern California under pretense of protecting everybody from Bolshevism. It is all wonderfully portrayed in that extraordinary new novel of Upton Sinclair's, "Oil." But not even so great a novelist as he could have imagined that no less exalted a personage than the President of the Better America Federation himself should be indicted for usury in connection with a company that issued illegally 1,000,000 shares of stock and defrauded several hundred thousand innocent investors. Among the indicted are three leading bank officials, two of them vice-presidents of the First National Bank, charged with taking jointly $100,000 for obtaining a loan of $385,000 from one of their banks, and with embezzlement on other counts. How zealously these patriots have labored to better America—and their bank accounts!

FOR ONCE SECRETARY MELLON'S SKILL in judging the money market has failed him and for the first time a refunding operation of his has fallen flat. He offered an issue of Treasury bonds redeemable in 1943-1947 at 3⅜ per cent to help finance the calling of the Second Liberty Loan on November 15 next. Only $250,000,000 acceptable cash subscriptions were received prior to the closing of the books. Of the $3,104,000,000 Second Liberty Bonds outstanding on February 27 last but $1,603,000,000 came in for exchange and of these $243,000,000 were exchanged for the new 3⅜'s. Of the remainder, $1,360,000,000 went for the three-to-five year 3½ per cent Treasury notes while $225,000,000 were purchased by the Treasury for retirement. That still leaves $1,276,000,000 which must be taken up by Mr. Mellon prior to November 15. Instead, therefore, of being closed now, the transaction will drag on through the summer. The fiscal year has, however, ended brilliantly, with a surplus of approximately $635,000,000 and a reduction in the public debt of $1,131,309,383. Undoubtedly this extremely favorable showing was due in part to the failure of a filibustering Congress to pass the Second Deficiency Bill, as a result of which some large expenditures will go over into the new fiscal year. Nonetheless, the surplus is so large that the politicians and the corporations will jointly demand a heavy tax reduction when the new session begins.

AMERICA WAS NOT NEEDED in the World War, didn't win it, and if this country had not come in the war would have been won by the Allies without its aid. Who says this? Some "spineless pacifist"? A Representative or Senator who voted against the war? No, indeed. No one less than Field Marshal Lord Haig himself, in an address to the British Empire Service League—an organization of war veterans. And this is what he said:

> If America had not come in, we might not perhaps have forced the enemy to surrender in 1918, for without the American reserves in existence it would have been unwise for us to risk throwing the whole force of the British army in France and Flanders into the tremendous series of battles which brought the war to a sudden, and by many politicians unexpected, end. But we should have won in the end all the same. (Cheers) . . . . In the course of the greatest war in history the British peoples mobilized, equipped, and trained, and put into the field the finest fighting force the world has yet seen. (Cheers). The discipline and quality of its rank and file, the leadership and initiative of its regimental officers, the organization of its supply and medical services, the competence and reliability of its staff and intelligence, all alike were unsurpassed.

This flag-waving British general sounds like some of our American officers. One of them, Major General Joseph T. Dickman, commanding the Third American Army, has just written as follows: "After accomplishing the defeat of the Kaiser's armies, the young American soldiers very naturally desired to return to their homes at an early date."

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Again, he says: "In the autumn of 1918 there were no troops in Europe beside the Americans who could have forced their way through the fortified fastnesses of the Argonne Forest. . . . The battle of November 1 and 2, 1918 . . . will forever be recognized as the final blow that drove the hosts of Germany to the very verge of collapse and *ended the war.*"

MORAL INDIGNATION, according to Bishop Manning, is the quality most necessary and most wanting in modern times. Moral indignation, the bishop continues, which is not afraid to call a spade a spade—and prefers to call it a manure-spreader. Thus Dr. Manning, in criticizing a "prominent preacher" in New York City—who turns out to be the Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick—for being in favor of dropping some old ideas of right and wrong, and substituting "beautiful" and "ugly" in their stead, remarks:

> Which means, I suppose, that there is no longer any law of God which is binding upon us and that our only standard is our own taste or preference. If this is true, if there is no law of God which must be obeyed, we need not wonder if our young people adopt "companionate marriage" or any other suggestion.

Dr. Fosdick's indignant repudiation of this muddying of his remarks was hardly necessary. What he said to the graduating class of Smith College was, in part:

> You are going out into a generation which is witnessing the breaking down of the old well-defined codes of right and wrong by which your fathers lived. . . . There is plenty that is rotten in the old codes concerning love and the relationship of the sexes. . . . Whatever debases personality is wrong and ugly; whatever elevates personality is right and beautiful. . . . When a generation discovers that the old codes cannot be used and set up for themselves high standards of their own, they have much firmer ground on which to proceed.

Other ministers have spoken equally soundly and intelligently. And to all of them the outraged Bishop of New York makes the same sort of reply, full of moral indignation and little else. Sin is sin, insists the Bishop; it always has been and it always will be. And ostriches have always buried their heads in the sand and the world has turned by them unperceived.

"SHALL POETS BECOME EXTINCT?" That highly rhetorical question is asked and answered by John Gould Fletcher, the American poet now living in England, in the current issue of the *Modern World.* His answer, of course, is No. But his proposal for making the lot of the poet a little easier than it happens to be is so unusual and so practical that the attention of millionaires should be called to it. Mr. Fletcher's very sensible idea is not that poets shall be subsidized for work they have still to do but that their volumes, once written and passed upon by a board of famous poets appointed for the purpose, shall be published for them in limited editions, "in good style and at a high price." If the small audience to which good poetry is and always has been addressed is there to buy the limited edition, well enough; at any rate the edition will exist. If a larger audience wants it, the volume can be taken over by a commercial publisher who will give it the distribution its author desires. The scheme has the merit of promising to bring much good poetry into print without agony to any publisher. Mr. Fletcher is certain that the jury of famous poets can be found; what about the millionaire?

When Is a Ship Not a Ship?

ANSWER: When she comes up the harbor of New York not a steamer but a Ritz-Carlton hotel and the ship-reporters busy themselves not with her sea-going quality or her speed, or the latest improvements embodied in her machinery, but with the vast sums lavished upon her decorations. Let seagoing sailormen listen to this and writhe:

> Deciding on the newest school of decoration, the execution of the plan was placed entirely in the hands of the foremost modernists in art and decoration in France. Using thirty-six kinds of wood, a subtle and lavish harmony of color has been produced from the natural shades of these woods. The grand salon is done in lacquer and gold. Around its walls are forty columns, each sixteen feet high, surrounding a dance floor of a thousand square feet. In this room are four statues, nine feet tall, in gold. . . . The dining room seating six hundred people, and the largest on any ship in the world, is decorated in three harmonizing shades of gray marble. Luminous stripes of gold again present the effect of a warm, bright sun, although the room is several decks below. Another new feature on the Ile de France is a permanent chapel two decks in height . . . a shooting gallery . . . and the largest gymnasium ever constructed aboard a ship. Also a bar which measures nearly thirty feet in length.

Yes, and dress-shops and barber-shops and a swimming pool and a special gymnasium for children and a travel bureau and a bank and safe-deposit vaults and a florist shop and heaven knows what else. And this is called going to sea! We confess that we have not yet seen these marvelous decorations of the salons. We cannot judge therefore whether they are, as some say, the latest in fine arts or, as others assert, merely early North German Lloyd. To the art critics we leave the decision. We merely protest once more that a floating hotel is no ship. It doesn't make any difference how graceful her lines or how beautiful her model—and all the great French liners are graceful and beautiful—this sort of thing is an insult to Father Neptune. It is more than that, a conspiracy against popular taste, an extension of the jazz age to the ocean; another bit of that terrible lurch into conformity which would make luxurious "lounge-lizards" of us all; which leads the younger generation to believe that there is no other way to spend one's life than on dancing floors a thousand feet square amid columns sixteen feet high and walls glittering with gilt, or in baroque with fat neo-Rubens nudes interspersed.

As for us, we'd rather go back to the old ways. If this is modernity then *The Nation* begs to be counted, at sea at least, among the conservative and the reactionary. Our mind goes back to a lovely old P. and O. Egypt-bound, on a glorious dark and starry night in the Mediterranean. There were yards and sails on all her three beautiful masts. There was only a dingy smoke-room, and a little dingier ladies' cabin. The main salon was flanked on both sides by state-rooms; there one ate one's meals and often heard untoward sounds from within. There were no baths and no running water. What matter? It was something different; it was a life apart; it had nothing in common with Broadway. That queen of the sea had no shops, and no chapel, no orchestra and no dance-floor, no columns and no nudes—it was just a plain, beautiful ship—one of the greatest works of man if not of God. Anyone may have the Ile de France who wants her. When we go to sea we want to go to sea, not to float across the ocean in a gilded barroom.

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Ambassador Houghton Tells Some More Truths

ALANSON B. HOUGHTON is an anachronism in our diplomatic service. He is not afraid to speak out in meeting, and when he speaks he has something to say—which is certainly unusual among those who belong to the statesman class. Our readers will recall the sensation Mr. Houghton made in the spring of 1926 when he returned from England and told the truth about the European situation with such frankness and vigor that chancelleries and press alike were horrified at his "calculated indiscretion." Now he has appeared before the Harvard Alumni Association on Commencement Day, after accepting the LL.D. which his alma mater justly and wisely bestowed upon him, and has dared to suggest that the war-making powers of governments should be taken away from them and vested in the people. Other forms and processes of government have been democratized; why not this? The one thing that remains unaffected is the question of war and the power to make it.

Mr. Houghton's real treason to the present order lies in the fact that he, a diplomat of years in Berlin and London, an observer at close hand of governmental machines, speaks slightingly of governments as "little groups of men" who are engaged in maneuvering the masses they represent into dangerous or fatal positions because these "little groups," as he puts it, "seek constantly and naturally to gain supposed advantages of one sort and another for their own nations." When they have succeeded in placing the peoples in a position from which it appears impossible to recede they next order under arms "those great masses of men and women roused by every power of organized appeal and propaganda . . . and war follows." He might well have added that the governing men behave thus because no penalty attaches to their own acts; they are held accountable by no one; they drape themselves in the flag and call themselves "the people" and "the country" when in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they are nothing but a set of temporary officials elected to office, with no mandate for war whatever. Identifying themselves with their nations, however, they call upon their deluded fellow-citizens—easily deluded because, as in both the Allied and the Central European countries, the diplomats suppress, garble, and misquote the documents which lead up to the impasse—to protect the virtue of their women, the safety of their homes, the sanctity of their national boundaries. The sacred honor of the flag is at stake. Who shall care that the scoundrels or incompetents who involved the flag are hiding behind it and carefully protecting their own rascally skins by staying in the seats of the mighty?

This language is, of course, ours and not the Ambassador's. But the implications are all there in his speech. He refuses to accept the theory that war is inevitable because human nature is what it is. That, he says, simply begs the question. War is not necessarily the "result of a process of necessity"; nor does it follow that the fighters would choose to fight under the conditions into which they are plunged. Especially, he says, "we have no reason to admit that a similar result would follow if the power to declare war were in the hands of the populations. That is precisely what we do not know. The experiment has never been tried. And there are considerations which, apparently, point the other way." Of these he cites four. First, the great self-governing peoples have shown themselves competent to manage their own domestic affairs, and "foreign affairs are merely an extension of their domestic affairs." This veteran diplomat dares to add that there is nothing mysterious about foreign affairs and that they are "not a sort of arcana, wherein the laws of common morality are excluded, and in which only cynical gentlemen of bilingual attainments are competent to play a role. They are in the main simply the natural and beneficial outcome of a desire to trade."

The Ambassador's second point is that war has so steadily increased its demands that no one can make any profit out of it; indeed, it threatens to wreck civilization itself, "for the wars of the civilized mean the breakdown of civilization." Thirdly, he points out that as long as the relations between peoples are based on force and every nation arms for defense, each "thus becomes potentially more able to attack and so more dangerous as a neighbor." Fourthly, and most important, the Ambassador asserts that, "the power to declare war stands on a different plane from all other powers of government. It is all-embracing and all-consuming." It is the one power which a people ought logically to reserve to itself, "since it puts in jeopardy their collective lives and property. And yet, strangely enough, it is the one power they do not possess." Under this head Mr. Houghton brings out the point so often made by *The Nation* that governments are never elected on the precise issue of peace or war; that, chosen for domestic reasons, they may not be at all representative when suddenly confronted by a decision as to war or peace. Theoretically, he points out, self-governing peoples control their relations with other peoples, but practically, by giving the power to make war to their governments, they have divested themselves of this control. He himself is whole-heartedly in favor of returning it to the people to whom it belongs. Our governments, he declares, have shown themselves unable to protect us against war. They continue to act along the well-defined grooves of the past and to misrepresent the people, whereas the great self-governing peoples are entirely ready to trust each other. And finally, he states the opinion of all the critics of the Versailles Treaty that "a durable peace cannot be based on force. It must, if it exists at all, be based upon good-will." Only a tradition "inherited from an outgrown system of autocratic government prevents our recognition of that great and beneficent fact. We are caught in a process of our own making. And we must unmake it."

These are profoundly wise and noble words, as great as they are constructive. We hail them with the greatest satisfaction. Yet what do we see? The speech utterly ignored by all the newspapers of the metropolis save only the *World* and the *Telegram*, and apparently ignored by the great press associations. Yet it is a message which ought to be broadcast over this continent and Europe, for its logic is unanswerable, its wisdom beyond successful dispute. Already men are arising to say it can't be done, and that if it could the peoples would vote for war. We deny that. But if it were true, we should still second this plea for the democratization of the greatest power for evil which conductors of government now have in their hands.

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The Scandal at Geneva

THE Disarmament Conference at Geneva is degenerating into a sorry spectacle. The assembled admirals and generals, and the few civilians scattered among them, show no desire to give the world a hearty shove along the path of peace; they have no slightest thought of really disarming; they are haggling and bargaining like a lot of Grand Street peddlers, each seeking to work out a "ratio" which will give his country some advantage in some class of warships.

Britain is deaf to suggestions of reducing the number of light cruisers—a class in which she far outranks the United States and Japan; the United States is eager for limitations which strike Britain, but regards proposals to reduce the big ships beyond the scales of the Washington Conference as violations of "sacred treaty rights." Mr. Hugh Gibson, chairman of our delegation, was even quoted as mouthing this jingo sentiment: "The United States will insist upon equality with Britain in all categories of ships unless forced into a situation where she might regard equality as insufficient"! In that bullyragging spirit peace is not made. That is the spirit which has aroused dislike of America in Europe; if continued it will make the conference the starting-point of a new international naval rivalry.

Possibly it is just as well that the officers and technical experts should thus early display their uselessness as leaders of a conference for the reduction of armaments. They do not want to disarm; at most they want to balance arms. They shudder at the thought of scrapping any of their lovely naval toys in the interest of economy and peace. They want to keep all they have, but to prevent the other fellow from building more. It would seem incongruous, of course, to introduce women, or labor leaders, or ministers of the gospel into such a conference. But if governments wanted to disarm, they would send such messengers; and the technical experts, the generals and admirals, instead of dictating policy would be the servants of policy. If the governments had even been sincere in their protestations of economy, they would have included in their delegations representatives of the suffering treasuries.

The treasury men know that the new naval race is pinching as much as the inter-Allied debts. Winston Churchill openly struggled against the British Admiralty when preparing his budget two years ago, but he was beaten, and Britain accepted the fifteen-cruiser program which is today one of the horrid specters of Geneva. It was the admirals, not the civilians, at Washington in 1921 who deliberately left the loophole for cruisers which is causing such ill feeling today. Mr. Churchill, who has been a jingo in his day but is a realist as Chancellor of the Exchequer, declared two months ago:

> There are only three great Powers able to keep a battle fleet in existence. An agreement between these three great naval Powers to abate the rate of their construction, or to limit the size of their ships, or some other agreement of that kind—in that lies the greatest hope of contraction in naval expenditure.

And of peace. Those three Powers are meeting at Geneva today—and they are throwing away their opportunity, gambling with the hopes of the world. Will the civilian governments who appointed these reckless admirals recall them or give them vigorous instructions before it is too late, or will they let the conference end in agreement upon meaningless nothings, pointing the way to new rivalries and opening new vistas of war?

The Wisdom of Herbert Brown

> I forecast in the United States a crop season which will be marked by destructive cold waves in the fruit and early vegetable sections bordering upon the Gulf of Mexico; late and destructive spring frosts affecting Eastern fruit and threatening the corn crop in its early stages through the Northern portion of the Corn Belt, particularly north of the Ohio and Potomac and east of the Mississippi. I predict that killing frosts will come in June and into July over this section, that frosts will occur again in August and in September. It will be only in the areas south of the Potomac and the Ohio and well down the lower middle Mississippi Valley where crops will be fairly safe from destructive cold waves.

HERBERT BROWN, who addressed these words to a group of business men meeting in Boston last September, has become a legend on the lips of the Middle West. For several years he issued unofficial weather forecasts from Washington, D. C., without attracting more attention than usually is paid to prophets in their own country. Here and there, however, individual readers of his words began to say that Herbert Brown was proving right; farmers asked each other who this man was anyway, and how he knew these things; the Department of Agriculture was reported to be impressed by his methods, or at least by his results; and editors of agricultural papers quietly kept tab on him until the time for expressing editorial opinion should come.

Now thousands will tell you that Herbert Brown last fall predicted the Mississippi floods in precisely their recent dimensions; that he foretold the tornadoes which accompanied them with such superfluous fury; and that today, when the corn is either rotting in the cold fields of Illinois or standing but knee high to a grasshopper, the wisdom of Herbert Brown is in process of demonstration. The *Prairie Farmer*, assuring its subscribers that a conservative policy has always kept it from dabbling in the sensational, decides that Herbert Brown can no longer be ignored in view of his uncanny accuracy. A Middle Western newspaper devotes a column on its front page to the July frosts soon to be expected if Brown is right; and the implication is that he must be right. The worst crop prospect in years is—no, not attributed to him (that stage in the legend is still to be reached), but at any rate referred back to his warning that 1927 would be a "year without a summer." Brown is not exactly "scientific," they admit; he goes by sun-spots and ocean currents instead of cyclones and anti-cyclones; but blessed if he doesn't seem to be hitting it.

We know next to nothing about Herbert Brown and certainly are in no position to judge the science, if any, that he employs. He may be wiser than all of the heads of all the weather bureaus in the world put together under one medicine hat—though we do understand that there is no agreement among astronomers and meteorologists concerning the effect of sun-spots and ocean currents. What interests us is the readiness of the Middle West, in these years of rain and cold and depression, to make a myth out of a weather man. What more natural? And what more gravely indicative of its general state of mind?

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Murder by "Persons Unknown"

By GAETANO SALVEMINI

THE Italian papers have published between April 29 and May 17 of this year summary and fragmentary, often incomprehensible, notices of a trial which was taking place at the Court of Assizes at Chieti—the same court at which was conducted, a year ago, the mockery of a trial for the murder of Giacomo Matteotti. Several English and American papers have published the fact that all the accused have been acquitted.

This acquittal is one of the most recent acts in a juridical farce which has lasted for a year and a half, and which is now approaching an end. It is a farce that follows upon a tragedy of blood and death.

On the night of Friday, September 25, 1925, the Fascists of Florence inaugurated a "man-hunt" against the Freemasons. Bludgeonings took place on a large scale for three days and went on sporadically during the following days. On October 3 a squad of Fascists went to the house of the Freemason Bandinelli, who the previous day had been beaten by the black-shirts. An altercation took place. Another Freemason, named Becciolini, drew his revolver and fired on the Fascists, killing one and wounding another. He was at once thrashed, flung into a motor-car, taken to the premises of the Fascist Provincial Federation, brought back again half dead to the scene of the murder, and there riddled with bullets. Bandinelli's house was sacked.

Two hours afterward further reprisals on a large scale were set on foot against persons entirely unconnected with the original incident. The offices of thirteen lawyers and one accountant, a tailoring business, and seven shops were wrecked—nearly all in the center of the town, in the vicinity of the prefecture, the police headquarters, and the barracks of the carabineers. Three private houses were sacked. A squad of Fascists appeared before the house of a tramwayman named Ademaro Cozzi, and summoned him to come out. The moment he did so, one of the band fired at him at close range with his revolver, and then fled with his companions. The bullet burned Cozzi's coat, but was stopped by his pocket-book. Having completed this operation, the band engaged two taxis, drove to the house of the lawyer Gustavo Consolo, beat in his door, and killed him in the presence of his wife and two children, eight and two years old. Meanwhile another squad of Fascists silently surrounded the house of Signor Pilati, a former Socialist member of Parliament. Pilati and his family, knowing nothing of what was happening in Florence that night, were asleep with the windows open on account of the heat. Silently placing a ladder against the sill, two Fascists climbed into the bedroom through the window and ordered the light to be turned on. One of them emptied his revolver point-blank into Pilati's body. Wounded in the leg, the groin, the stomach, and the shoulder, Pilati died after three days' of suffering.

In the suburbs of Florence (Ponte a Mensola, Trespiano, Legnaia, Badia a Ripoli, and Zavarnelle) and in other communes (San Baronto, Anghiari, Arezzo, Prato, Montemurlo) acts of violence took place similar to those of Florence although less ferocious than those of which Pilati and Consolo were victims. The sacking continued in Florence on October 4, and shops owned by the brothers Breschi, the brothers Fini, by the tailor Rossi, together with the house of the accountant Carrer, were wrecked.

The police were conspicuous by their absence from all these acts of violence. Not one of the guilty was arrested on the spot. But this "Saint Bartholomew" of Florence aroused intense indignation wherever the facts became known. Florence is a cosmopolitan city. In early October it is full of foreigners. These had eyes to see, ears to hear, and tongues to speak.

The Fascist Government felt it necessary to show that it was in no way responsible for what had happened at Florence. To do this there was only one course open to it; the guilty must be arrested, tried, and of course condemned. Now we come to the farce. A week after the crimes had been committed the police bestirred themselves and began ostentatiously to make arrests.

A first trial took place from November 21 to 24, 1925, before the Florentine courts. It was concerned with the activities of the band of fifteen Fascists who had sacked the shops of the Breschis and Finis and Carrer's house on the morning of October 4. Another trial on December 11, 1925, dealt with the looting of a pastry-cook's premises. Both trials resulted in ludicrous sentences, which were trumpeted abroad as the result of Fascist justice.

During these same days fourteen persons accused of having, on October 3, taken part in the wrecking of a pharmacy at Legnaia were provisionally set at liberty; and twenty-seven Fascists of Prato, against whom warrants of arrest had been issued for robbery and violence, were simply bound over. On March 8, 1926, eight men charged with attacking and looting the villa Baldi on the night of October 3, 1925, received glaringly inadequate sentences; the most severe was binding over for five months (*Corriere della Sera*, March 9, 1926). On March 20 seven men accused of looting a shop belonging to Enrico Ricci, a second-hand dealer, were discharged (*Stampa*, March 21). In May, 1926, twenty-four Fascists received negligible sentences for having broken into and sacked private houses. On June 17 the court acquitted the editor of the *Battaglie Fasciste*, together with other heads of the Fascio, who had led squads in the outbreaks between September 25 and 29, and who had publicly assumed responsibility for them. On June 30, 1926, the Fascist Gino Lecci was acquitted on the charge of having taken part in the outrages of October 4. On October 27 six Fascists, accused of acts of violence at Badia a Ripoli, were acquitted as not having been involved in the affair, or on grounds of insufficient evidence (*Avanti*, October 25). On November 19 eight Fascists were acquitted of the murder of Becciolini on the grounds of insufficient evidence; two only remained under trial for this murder, but they were declared by the judges to be guilty of "inflicting serious injuries," not of murder (*Nazione*, November 20). Thus Becciolini was not murdered, but only seriously injured! On December 1 five other Fascists were acquitted.

The trial at Chieti of April, 1927, is the most monstrous of all. The Fascist jury, in its verdict delivered on May 16, "affirmed the existence of the facts"; that is, they ad-

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mitted that Pilati and Consolo were killed, that Cozzi's life was saved only by the bullet being stopped, that the offices of the lawyers Corazzini, Citi, Targetti, and the shops of Cardoro and Soli were sacked on the night of October 3, 1925. But they acquitted all the accused. These crimes were committed by "persons unknown."

This is the rule in Italy today for political crimes committed by Fascists. A "person unknown" in the dictionary of the "new era" is a Fascist who kills an anti-Fascist, and whose name is known by all except the judge. Under the Fascist regime the trains arrive on time, but justice lags behind.

The propagandist of the Fascist Government in England, Signor Luigi Villari, in the *Review of Reviews* (April-May, 1926), in reference to what happened in Florence, wrote:

> The persons responsible for the Florence incidents(!) of last October were *all* arrested *within a few days*, and while those indicted for murder are in prison awaiting trial before the assizes, the minor offenders have *all* been tried and *condemned*, and quite recently their appeals to the higher court have been rejected.

Some weeks later he was assailed by certain doubts as to his assertion that "all" those responsible had been arrested, but on the whole he found that it was not helpful to the cause to confess that the guilty had been arrested only within a few days of his statement. He therefore wrote in his book, "The Fascist Experiment" (p. 90):

> *Nearly* all the guilty were *at once* arrested. The persons responsible for the wrecking of the shops and offices were tried within a few weeks of the affair and condemned to varying terms of imprisonment, and the authors of the murders are awaiting trial.

It will be interesting to see in what way the propagandist will demonstrate that justice has been meted out for the "incidents" of Florence. Pointing with pride to a prompt and improved railway schedule ought not to be sufficient explanation.

Frenzied Railroad Finance

By MARSHALL LYNN

LOOKING toward a fourth great rail system in the East —comparable to the Pennsylvania, Baltimore & Ohio, and New York Central systems—the Van Sweringen proposal for the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad to acquire the Erie and Pere Marquette systems has caught the public mind. Recent legislation, and President Coolidge's outspoken advocacy, had prepared the way; and the C. & O. plan with its parent proposal, the recently disapproved Nickel Plate consolidation, have leaped into the headlines.

And when, in the recent hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission, O. P. Van Sweringen, chairman of the board of directors of the C. & O., informed the commission that he and his associates would be willing to give up a profit of $10,000,000 on their holdings of Erie stock in order to obtain the approval of the commission for the C. & O. application, a new interest was created. How had he maneuvered himself into that ten-million-dollar profit anyway? And were there other hidden ten millions?

The Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company is asking authority to acquire control by stock ownership of the Erie Railroad and the Pere Marquette Railroad, and to issue $59,000,000 of common stock to finance this acquisition. This plan was devised by a special committee of the board of directors of the C. & O. after the Commerce Commission, on March 2, 1926, had refused to authorize the previous Van Sweringen plan to unify the three roads involved with the Nickel Plate and Hocking Valley roads. Avowedly it was a step toward eventual unification of the three roads. The roads involved in the new plan are, with the exception of the Nickel Plate, the same as before. The proponents of this plan claim that the commission, while denying authorization to the earlier Nickel Plate consolidation, had in substance commended it from the physical and transportation standpoints, basing the adverse decision on the financial features.

The Van Sweringens and their friends say that the C. & O., although serving some of the richest coal-producing districts in the country (hauling in 1926 more coal originating on its own lines than any of the three preeminent systems of the East except the Pennsylvania), is in danger of being stifled and reduced to the status of a purely local carrier unless it can extend its primary system to the North- and Middle West; that union with the Erie would give the C. & O. facilities for competing in the Middle Western area on an approximately equal footing with other carriers in that territory, and provide an adequate traffic artery from Cincinnati to Chicago for the C. & O.'s westbound traffic at a cost of but $42,000,000, or only $8,000,000 more than would be necessary to render the present Chicago division of the C. & O. adequate for that purpose; that the inclusion of the Pere Marquette would give direct access to the thriving industrial territory surrounding Detroit and a through route to Milwaukee and the gateway to the Northwest without diversion through Chicago; and finally that by virtue of the C. & O.'s access to Hampton Roads and the Erie's to New York these two greatest ports of the Atlantic seaboard would have direct connection in a single system with the centers of the Northwest and the Great Lakes. They estimate an anticipated saving of some $2,500,000 annually in the operation of the combined roads, and predict large increases in business.

But minority stockholders of the C. & O., through whose efforts the Nickel Plate merger was defeated, and who (with some defections, it is true) are as staunchly in opposition to the C. & O. plan, are little impressed with these alluring prospects. In their view the C. & O. owes its present secure and profitable position in great measure to the very fact that it is independent. Formation of any such entangling alliance as that proposed with the Pere Marquette and the Erie, they insist, would involve immediate enmity with the Pennsylvania, Baltimore & Ohio, and others, and the withdrawal of a considerable portion of the business which the C. & O. has in the past enjoyed from those roads. Also they assert—and W. J. Harahan, president of the road, was forced to admit this at the recent hearings—that the most vital concern of the C. & O. at

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present is to obtain control of the Virginian, another important coal road paralleling the C. & O. from the West Virginia coal fields to Hampton Roads. This, they say, will provide ample use for all possible funds available to the C. & O. Mr. Harahan himself testified that unless control of the Virginian were acquired by the C. & O. his road would be compelled to expend some $32,000,000 for double tracking, new piers at Hampton Roads, and new cars.

The objection of the C. & O. minority, however, is essentially financial. On this feature the heaviest guns of minority counsel were trained at the hearings, and the high point of their fight was reached—and won—when Mr. Van Sweringen was compelled to take the stand on behalf of his own plan and disclose his own operations and those of his associates in the stocks of the roads involved. It was in the course of this testimony that he made his sensational offer to waive a ten-million-dollar profit.

This ten-million-dollar profit represents the difference between the present market value of the Erie Railroad stock now owned by the Van Sweringen interests (which, it is proposed, the C. & O. shall purchase) and the price at which this stock is optioned to the C. & O. Since the options held by the C. & O. on this stock were binding only until July 1, 1927, Mr. Van Sweringen's promise that he would extend the options for such time as might be necessary for the commission to reach its decision and keep the price at the original figure was in effect a renunciation of the appreciation in value of this stock since September, 1926, as of which time the price of this stock was fixed. For a better understanding of this feature, the following figures may be noted.

The present capitalization of the Erie consists of 1,124,819 shares of common stock, 479,044 shares of first preferred, and 160,000 shares of second preferred. When the C. & O. filed its application for authority to buy control, it had already acquired some 350,000 shares of the common, 137,000 shares of first preferred, and 50,000 of second preferred. These shares were bought in the open market, and the average price paid was $38.58 per share for the common, $47.21 for first preferred, and $44.94 for second preferred. As to the remainder of the stock necessary to majority ownership, the C. & O. holds options on some 476,000 shares of common at a price of $34.50, plus interest at 6 per cent from September 29, 1926; 24,000 first preferred at $45.875, with the same interest; and 25,000 second preferred at $43.75, with interest. Of the shares under option 345,000 shares of the common, 23,000 first preferred, and 22,000 second preferred are at present in the ownership of the Van Sweringen interests.

The option prices were fixed by a special committee of C. & O. directors and in comparison with the prices paid in the market for the stock already bought by the railroad seem eminently fair. In fact, the minority stockholders admit that the profits of the Van Sweringens on this stock, if any, will be negligible.

But cross-questioning of Oris Van Sweringen eventually elicited the information that up to the date of presentation of the C. & O. application, the Vaness Company, which is used by Oris and his brother for a considerable portion of their private tradings, had sold 77,000 shares of Erie first preferred for which they had originally paid approximately $29 per share, 400 shares of second preferred for which their average payments had been $21 per share, and 19,900 shares of common which had cost them an average of $16 per share, for an aggregate profit of something more than $1,500,000. This Vaness Company is the successor of the Nickel Plate Securities Corporation, with which the Van Sweringens made their debut into railroad circles about 1913. Eighty per cent of its stock is held by the Van Sweringen brothers, and the remainder by two of their fellow directors on the C. & O. and Nickel Plate roads.

With regard to the Pere Marquette stock, the C. & O. was in control of 1,900 out of a total issue of 450,460 shares of common, 2,100 out of 112,000 prior preference, and 12,600 out of 124,290 preferred, the average prices paid having been $117.17, $93.65, and $90.72 per share respectively. Options were held on 261,400 shares additional of the common stock, at an average price of $110.004 per share. Of these, 36,500 are owned by the Van Sweringen interests, 50,000 by other individuals, and the remainder, or 174,000 shares, by the Nickel Plate Railroad. Statistics as to the dealings of the Van Sweringens in the Pere Marquette stock showed no great profits; but, it was claimed, Mr. Van Sweringen emphatically declined to promise that the Nickel Plate would agree to extend the options on this stock, which also expire on July 1. It must be borne in mind that some 54 per cent of the voting stock of the latter road is owned by the Vaness Company.

Opponents of the C. & O. plan insist that these facts point strongly to the conclusion that the Van Sweringen plan to turn the Erie and Pere Marquette over to the C. & O. does not arise solely out of concern for the interests of that road. The Erie they regard as the weak sister of the Eastern rails, control of which at the proposed prices would only dilute the present large earnings of the C. & O. With the Pere Marquette the C. & O. already has physical connection and traffic agreements, under which the former is taking all the business which the C. & O. can turn over to it.

The story of the Van Sweringen brothers' rise to their present position in the railroad world, partially brought to light in these cases, presents an amazing picture of the possibilities of modern finance, and seems to show that the devices of financiers have kept pace with the long strides made in the way of governmental regulation of transportation facilities. Starting in 1913, with the acquisition of the old Nickel Plate road at an ultimate net investment of scarcely more than $500,000; adding the Clover Leaf, the Lake Erie & Western, the Chicago and State Line, and the Fort Wayne, Cincinnati & Louisville to make the present Nickel Plate system; financing the whole by means of bond issues, non-voting preferred stock, and sale of small portions of common stock so that the Van Sweringens remained in the end in full voting control of the system by a total net investment of some $3,750,000; finally buying up virtual control of the C. & O., Hocking Valley, Erie, and Pere Marquette they have furnished in the railroad world a complete demonstration of the possibilities of pyramiding holding companies one upon another. What their net investment in their present holdings has been probably no one knows; but in the history of their building up of the Nickel Plate is ground for suspicion that their newer plans may tend in the same direction.

Almost from the first the Van Sweringens have been assisted by some of the leading financial houses of the country, notably J. P. Morgan and Company and the First National Bank of New York. When they acquired control of the C. & O. one of the first changes of policy was to transfer the bulk of the road's deposits from the local banks in its

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own territory to these New York institutions. The change was not relished by the smaller stockholders of the C. & O.—nor, it may be imagined, by the banks from which the deposits were taken.

Disclosures such as those made in the C. & O. case demonstrate that the Interstate Commerce Commission must be given greater control over transactions in the stock of railroads and over the control of railroads by holding companies. Otherwise we can never have a really systematic unification of the present carriers, and what unification we get will not be determined by considerations of advantage to the public welfare.

Honor Is a Tradition of the Sea

By FRANK CHALONER AMES

ON the night of Wednesday, March 2, 1927, tropical stars tried with scant success to dispel the inky darkness. A fresh wind blew and the sea ran choppily. A million-dollar freighter with a million-dollar cargo steamed forth from Cebu for Masbate. On her bridge stood the third mate and a pilot. At the wheel was a young Norwegian seaman. On watch, a German sailor strained his eyes for the safety of the ship. For these are dangerous waters.

Ding ding! Two bells. Nine o'clock. The German sailor sighted a light dead ahead. As is customary he notified the bridge. What had taken possession of the third mate's dull Scandinavian brain no one can tell. He called the man off watch and sent him after ice water for the pilot! The young Norwegian had also sighted the light, but without orders he could not alter the course.

At 9:11 p.m. the freighter struck and sank the Perlas Filipinas, a small balandra bound for Cebu with sugar, six Visayan seamen, and their month's wages. The engines stopped in answer to wild signals from the bridge. Excited yells rose fearfully on the night air. The flicker beam of the searchlight frantically swept the sea for signs of life. Did someone see a human hand emerge from the water and clutch hopelessly at nothing? If so, it was quickly gone. While men's hearts stood still the work boat was lowered for the rescue. For two hours the little craft bobbed up and down upon the choppy sea, hitting and being hit by bits of wreckage. It returned with five dazed natives from the sunken craft. The sixth could not be found.

At eleven o'clock the freighter was once more under way.

The terrified, shivering survivors stood huddled near the fidly. In a hot torrent of Spanish a mestizo custom's officer was cursing them for being so careless. They were idiots! Did they not see the freighter? Why had they no lights? He himself saw none. Proof conclusive that they had none. They should be put in prison. If he had his way he would place them in Corregidor! To all this invective and insult the five pitiable fellows returned not a word. No speak Inglis, no sabbe Español.

The captain, mate, and pilot tried in every way to browbeat information from them, an admission that they carried no lights. No effect was apparent other than a tighter resolve on their part to say nothing. They were turned over to the steward's department for safe-keeping. Messboys led them aft and gave them hot coffee to drink, attended to one or two superficial wounds they had suffered, and supplied them with blankets, mattresses, and a place to sleep in the rope locker. There was little sleep that night.

The million-dollar freighter with its million-dollar cargo anchored at Masbate. For five days white men wondered at the strength of the obreros trotting the length of a long wharf, up a steep gangway, over blistering steel decks, with anywhere from one hundred to two hundred pounds of copra on their stooping backs.

At the end of five torrid days the now very friendly survivors were put aboard the inter-island steamer for Cebu, their home port. The captain of the freighter in a strange effort to appear generous presented each of them with two small tins of cheap smoking tobacco! They came aft in wonder not untinged with sadness. How were they to buy food without money? Their families at home could not consume tobacco in lieu of bread. Men of the crew gave them what they could spare. With some fifteen pesos to divide among them the Visayans left the ship and in the clear dawn of a lovely tropical morning the freighter weighed anchor and pointed her bow in the direction of Manila.

Cavite with its great wireless masts loomed up. Shortly afterward the freighter arrived in Manila, the largest city and first seaport of the islands. Here the court of inquiry was to sit. Undoubtedly there would be justice done. Probably the ship would be held until the owners of the Perlas Filipinas could appear in court. It was certain that the Visayan crew would come with their employers and give testimony.

Yes, that was most likely what was going to happen. So the crew of the freighter worked unmindful of the case, each man at his appointed task.

The captain was satisfied with the German sailor. He would be "safe." He was not dismissed, so he stood near the door of the captain's office while the young Norwegian was being questioned. Would the young fellow also be sensible enough to do as he was told? A moment's conversation disclosed the almost staggering fact that he would not. He would tell the truth. In court one was supposed to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. To lie in such a place and manner was to make one's self unfit to become an American citizen. And he had his first papers.

"Well, I'll be ——," thundered the captain. Then to the German sailor: "What do you think of that; is that right?" Didn't he [the German sailor] think the lowest thing a man could do was to squeal on a shipmate? Whatever he thought, he nodded his head and discreetly acquiesced in the captain's judgment. He was given the day off. Without any more ado he promptly went ashore, visited such places of alcoholic refreshment as seemed suited to his taste, and returned early next day unfit for court duty. For this unseemly conduct he was neither logged nor otherwise punished.

The captain proceeded to threaten the Norwegian.

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Among other things he told him to watch his step on the way home if he so much as breathed a word in court. He went aft with tears in his eyes. Tears of disgust and anger.

The court sat. The outcome was awaited with eagerness. Some of the crew desired a longer stay in Manila. But by this time the outcome was guessed most uncannily by some cynics aboard the ship. The million-dollar freighter would be absolved, they said, and would sail tomorrow. At nine o'clock the next morning newsboys cried forth the august decision of the court. The cynics had it.

Among other things mentioned was the fact that no witnesses for the defense had appeared. But what difference does that make when a million-dollar ship with a million-dollar cargo tugs impatiently at the dock? What difference does it make whether one or one thousand native seamen lose their inconsequential lives so long as a careless mate and a careless pilot save their jobs?

The freighter headed east for San Francisco. At nine knots an hour it cut through that vast expanse of water ill named the Pacific. The ship must be painted before the Golden Gate loomed up. She must look as lovely as a maid just out of boarding school. And so men were busy in the fresh, stinging wind, with black, yellow, white, and red paint, with chipping hammers and wire brushes. On the homeward trip all enmity is forgotten among the members of the crew. Usually.

The young Norwegian was working hard: at particularly hateful tasks, too. That was noted by the cynics. He spilled some paint. The mate espied this from the corner of his alert eye. He came up and cursed the seaman and ordered him to go forward and paint on a winch. His fists were clenched, but other members of the crew were near. He followed his prey. On the forward deck, out of sight of all except those on the bridge he struck at the Norwegian but missed as the latter turned and avoided the blow. Interruption in the form of other sailors prevented any further assault. At least so it seemed to the cynics.

The ship was half way home. The Norwegian was taking his afternoon smoke just after coming off wheel and before going on deck. The mate burst into the mess-room where he sat with other members of the crew off duty, spluttering forth some almost unintelligible words to the effect that the young Norwegian had better get out on deck or he would be logged. Inasmuch as all the other seamen were allowed ten minutes' smoking time both morning and afternoon there was no reason why he should not be entitled to the same. He was advised by some of the crew to go on duty at once. He did.

At suppertime the men discussed the extraordinary logging of the Norwegian seaman for being late on duty! The cynics kept silence.

The freighter neared San Francisco. The Norwegian seaman was standing four-hour watches at the wheel. The usual watch was two hours. He was on the second mate's watch. He was tired. He leaned back on the bulkhead which separated the wheel-house from the chart-room. He held the wheel in a manner which displeased the second mate. The ship was right on its course; no one had during the previous months taken exception to the way in which he held the wheel.

The second mate entered the wheel-house. In an instant the Norwegian seaman was clouted a terrific blow on the ear. His head rang, he felt warm blood trickle down the side of his neck. Tears of rage filled his eyes. He did not dare to strike back. Why? Mutiny! Irons, bread and water, imprisonment on shore. Perhaps worse right on the ship. Anything could be done in "self-defense."

The mess-table talk was wild and pointless. But a light was beginning to dawn upon the most unenlightened. The cynics said little. They suggested an attitude of resignation until San Francisco should be reached. There the shipping commissioners might look into it. On this they were divided.

San Francisco was reached and the left wing of the cynical party triumphed. The only thing the Norwegian seaman could do was quit the ship. If he had made a protest he would have been framed and more than likely deported. Besides he had no witnesses.

Honor remains a tradition of the sea!

In the Driftway

WHEN it became known that President Coolidge was looking for a likely place to spend the summer months, many State legislatures sought to lure him to their respective States with resolutions of invitation. The bare chance of securing the Presidential presence inspired the legislators to the sublimest flights. The legislatures are dilatory in publishing their collected works, but the Minnesota, New Mexico, and South Dakota resolutions have come to the Drifter's hand, and they are worth scanning.

* * * * *

AS a prose poem the Minnesota resolution, despite some undoubted merits, deserves, the Drifter thinks, to rank lowest. It states what it has to offer the President in almost a matter-of-fact tone. The New Mexico legislature's resolution has a certain lilt to it:

> WHEREAS, The tonic atmosphere of New Mexico is tired nature's sweet restorer and its civilization as old as yesterday and as young as tomorrow and its history crammed with antiquity and artistic interest as well as with grandeur of natural scenery, of mountain, and plain, and,
>
> WHEREAS, Its capital city of Santa Fe is the aesthetic capital of America, therefore,
>
> *Be and it is hereby Resolved*, That President Coolidge be and he is hereby invited to visit New Mexico for such vacation and to establish the federal summer capital in this ancient city.

In spite of these lyric flights, it is easy to see why the President is not in New Mexico today. The Drifter does not imagine that Mr. Coolidge would be attracted to any place because it is the aesthetic capital of America. It might be distinctly uncomfortable to be thrown with the bolsheviks and artists who live in Santa Fe. In the summer time one wants to relax.

* * * * *

BUT, as the world now knows, the South Dakota legislature won the prize with its resolution. It is composed of pithy little sentences describing the attractions of the Black Hills. For instance:

> Their summer climate is ideal, healthful, and invigorating; the temperature moderate in the daytime and invariably cool at night.
>
> These mountains are sublime in lofty peaks, sheer

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precipices, towering spires, domes, crags, and formations not elsewhere found.

They abound in beautiful flora of an infinite variety.

Fine streams of purest water run through the defiles. Fishing is excellent. Black brook, lochlavan, and rainbow trout are abundant.

The man who wrote that last sentence knew "Cal's" public weakness. But this one must have been irresistible:

The population in and about these mountains is intelligent and moral with whom neighborly relations are safe and pleasurable.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

The Reform Movement in Michigan

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: You and your readers may be interested to know that the Michigan Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution has appointed its committees for the coming year, and that on the Committee on Public Welfare and Defense are Truman H. Newberry and Edwin Denby, and on the Committee on Americanization and Patriotic Education is Charles Beecher Warren.

Detroit, June 24 RUSSELL MACCLINCHY

Chicago's Mayors

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: You publish a letter charging that ex-Mayor Dever was elected mayor of Chicago on a platform of immediate municipal ownership and within six months thereafter repudiated his promise.

I was chairman of the Local Transportation Committee of the City Council prior to and during the Dever administration and know the facts. Dever made no promise of immediate municipal ownership either in a formal platform or in public utterance. During his term Mr. Dever by the exertion of tremendous effort and the full power of his office procured the passage by the City Council and submitted to a referendum the only municipal-ownership ordinance ever presented to the people of Chicago. This ordinance provided for the acquisition of title to all transportation utilities by the city, eliminated all excess profit in financing, and provided for operation by a board of which the mayor controlled six out of nine members. It was based on a plan which I had submitted to the City Council prior to the Dever administration, whereby in lieu of corporate bonds, which the city could not issue because of the limitations of the State constitution, certificates payable solely out of the earnings of the utilities were to be used to finance their acquisition by the city. The ordinance as finally adopted by the City Council was partly prepared and in all respects was approved by William H. Holly, at that time a law partner of Clarence Darrow, and an avowed advocate of municipal ownership.

The only alternative to the ordinance suggested by its opponents was a plan involving an amendment to the State constitution. For a quarter of a century efforts have been made to procure such an amendment without avail. To procure it would require control of the legislature, the cooperation of the governor, the carrying of elections in city and State, and finally negotiations for the acquisition of the utilities or a suit to condemn.

Some municipal-ownership advocates opposed the ordinance on the ground that the heads of the companies were favorable to the plan. Samuel Insull stayed abroad until shortly before the election and then stated publicly that he was opposed to the municipal-ownership basis of the ordinance but would not oppose the city administration. Privately he stated that he could not afford, because of his vast utility interests, to see any extension of municipal ownership such as this ordinance implied. The ordinance was defeated by more than 100,000 votes and it is my conviction that in large part this was due to the fact that it was regarded as a municipal-ownership ordinance.

In any event there never was a public official who more honestly strove to solve the traction problem in the public interest than did Mr. Dever.

Since your correspondent's letter was published the Insull traction bills, paving the way for a perpetual franchise, have been prepared and passed through the Illinois Senate, with the approval of Mayor Thompson. To my mind the story points its own moral for the liberal citizen who is ready to desert an honest public official because he has not conformed to 100 per cent of his creed.

Chicago, June 18 ULYSSES S. SCHWARTZ

Radio Censorship

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The instance of radio censorship to which you called attention in one of your issues, when a speaker at a dinner of the All Nations Association was cut off for an incidental praise of pacifism, is not by any means the only recent case of radio censorship. Two broadcasting stations recently refused to permit a broadcast of the play "Spread Eagle," and in addition Victor Berger was cut off after he had been speaking for only a few minutes.

Each week that passes renders it more than ever apparent that the labor, Socialist, and pacifist forces of this country must get a broadcasting station of their own. The proposed station WDEBS, which a committee of Socialists, progressive labor leaders, and peace advocates are trying to obtain, would fill the bill in every way. Norman Thomas, the chairman of the committee to raise funds for it, states that the obvious difficulty about securing a license and a wave length can be avoided by buying a station which already has had a wave length assigned to it.

Cambridge, Mass., June 15 ALFRED BAKER LEWIS

Contributors to This Issue

GAETANO SALVEMINI is author of "The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy."

MARSHALL LYNN is Washington correspondent for the Richmond *News Leader* and the Wilmington (Del.) *Every Evening*.

FRANK CHALONER AMES has just returned from a five months' voyage on an American freighter as a member of the crew.

W. NORMAN BROWN is professor of Sanskrit at the University of Pennsylvania and has been professor of English in the Prince of Wales College, Jammu, India.

J. FRANK DOBIE is the author of "Texas Legends."

WALTER VOGDES is a California novelist and newspaperman now living in New York.

THERESA WOLFSON is author of "The Woman Worker and the Trade Unions."

KEITH HUTCHISON is associated with the British Library of Information in New York.

HERBERT SOLOW was history editor of the *Literary Review of the New York Evening Post*.

LOUIS E. VAN NORMAN has been commercial attaché at the American Legation in Bucharest.

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Books

Carbolic Acid for India

Mother India. By Katherine Mayo. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

IT is entirely doubtful what effect this book will have. Miss Mayo went to India to find social evils, and she found them; "Mother India" is an outburst of passionate indignation that such things should be, that the British should have suffered them, that the Nationalists, who are wresting the control of the country from foreign hands, should take no more than an academic interest, that the most that exists in the way of reform should be mere talk. With her gift for quick, effective description, and an instinct to ferret out the most noisome details, she paints a revolting picture of a diseased and loathsome country, and, moved in every cell of her being, she lashes alike all who seem to her contributors to the failure to apply the obvious remedies, not sparing even Tagore and Gandhi.

The horrors she relates are of the same sort that the missionaries have for generations been repeating in the West, but her book, in its completeness and devastating effectiveness, is as much more thorough than theirs as carbolic acid is for a disinfectant than distilled water. The only book that can approach hers is one from which she quotes frequently, Abbé Dubois's "Hindu Manners, Customs, and Ceremonies," first published in 1816. Both authors have a brilliant command of the pictographic and both are shocked at India. Often they are shocked by the same things, but in general their sense of values differs, in which respect a student of the history of ideas would find them interesting and contrasting representatives of their respective generations. Dubois looks for moral and religious depravity, accounting social and economic phenomena as secondary; Miss Mayo ignores Indian religions, philosophy, literature, and art—about all of which she seems vastly uninformed—except in so far as she thinks them connected with lapses in hygiene, sanitation, medicine, agricultural methods, stock-breeding, and other concrete social and economic failures.

From the Western point of view her book constitutes an impressive indictment of Indian society; there is no element that is spared. If in regard to enforced widowhood she speaks more favorably of the Sikhs or the Mohammedans than she does of the Hindus, it is only elsewhere to boil over regarding other social abuses of which these portions of the population are guilty, although she may not accuse them specifically. But the chief object of her indignation is the Hindu branch, the followers of the religion Hinduism, comprising roughly about three-fourths of India's 315 millions. They are in the majority and they are practitioners of the greatest number of the social evils she is attacking.

Approximately half her book deals with the woman question in India, the details of which are much more elementary than the phrase suggests in the West. There is child marriage, often involving cohabitation before puberty and child-birth at the earliest possible moment, sometimes at the age of eight. The effects on the mothers and the children are inevitable. As if this were not bad enough, there is added the unbelievable way of the native midwives, whose methods, for sheer filth and benightedness, could not be excelled—yet even educated Indians allow them to be practiced upon their own families. Along with these go enforced widowhood among the Hindus and seclusion of women among Mohammedans and to a lesser degree among Hindus. The chief cause for these evils, she makes her readers feel, is the sensuality of the men, especially the Hindu men; the next important cause the ignorance of the older generation of women, the comparatively few who have survived the treatment and therefore have confidence in it.

In the rest of her book she deals with such problems as the sanctity of animal life, above all of the "mother" cow, who, by her immunity to death, deprives the country of a meat supply and literally eats herself out of pasturage and into yielding a thin trickle of milk, becoming in the end a liability to the country. The most gruesome thing in her history is her old age, uncared for and unfed. And instead of being bettered it is made worse if she is unlucky enough to get into a *pinjra pol* (animal haven), a "standing and starving ground," the refuge wealthy and pious Hindus found to save the sacred animal from quick death in a Mohammedan slaughter-house. She also reports on the condition of the sixty million "untouchables," whose social status is in some respects even worse than she describes; so too with the hoarding of precious metals, the full economic implications of which she does not develop.

We cannot say that this book reveals itself as the product of a reflective mind. Miss Mayo made of herself a kind of journeying camera through India, selecting for preservation the most horrible and striking scenes that are quickly recordable. But she never gets under the surface to seek for causes in order that suitable remedies may be prescribed. The malignancy of nature, the depressing and debilitating effect of the climate, the economic misery it has brought to the country, the famines, the thousands of years of foreign invasion and internal warfare, the very fierceness of the struggle for life, the range of disease, the threat of sudden and violent death from unapprehendable sources as well as from wild animals and other obvious agents—these as factors in the development of spiritual, mental, and social life are apparently no more to her than mere words. She accepts the easy conclusion that it is India's peculiar religious notions, in especial the doctrine of Karma (Rebirth and Retribution), that are responsible for the apathy in social matters, without apparently realizing that these notions are quite as much effect as they are cause. Her attitude in this respect is much like that of the old-style missionary, whose cause, however, she is always careful never to adopt. Coming from a country barely three centuries old, she cannot visualize the weight of five millennia of tradition in creating the social inertia she attacks, still less the situation responsible for the rise of the tradition.

It is perhaps due to this lack of reflective power that Miss Mayo sees no way out, or at least argues for none, although she implies a kind of faith in laws. The logical conclusion of her diatribe of disgust and despair would seem to be extermination, at least of the Hindu males. Mr. Wells, if the matter should ever receive his attention, would doubtless counsel "education," as did Raja Ram Mohun Roy, the Rev. Mr. Duff, Macaulay, and other reformers or missionaries a century ago when Western education was adopted in the government colleges instead of Oriental. Certainly "education," meaning the imparting of ideas, has done and is doing something to alleviate the miseries of India; so too are economic improvements, such as railroads, irrigation, scientific stock-breeding, and agricultural experimentation. Cooperative societies are freeing the peasant from the money-lender. Western medicine has made some headway. Above all the example of other peoples influences the conduct of the best-educated Indians. Miss Mayo must be a little patient, must take a somewhat longer view. Indians, no more than Westerners, are without a humanitarian spirit; we have historical records to show it has been there for 2,500 years. But first they must learn that things *could* be different; as they slowly do so, the spirit will be extended to a wider application. Until they do so, even the sufferers will reject the remedies, as her own book abundantly testifies.

The answer Miss Mayo would make to these criticisms is perhaps that it is not her business either to search for causes, which might be utilized by Indian apologists as excuses for doing nothing, or to prescribe remedies, which might be shown impracticable. She is a goad to chastise the errant, but it is the Indians themselves who must discover the difficult road to

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their salvation. One wonders if it is reasonable to expect infuriation to save those whom she has painted as blind.

We repeat it is hard to calculate the effect of her book. In this country, where it is certain to be widely read, particularly by those who run to the shocking and morbid, it will probably do no more than nourish the doctrine of racial (white) superiority and injure the all too delicate plant of international tolerance that puts a feeble root into our soil. In India the sale of the book will depend much upon chance, advertising, and the publishing of a cheap edition. Its reception is totally beyond us to predict. Some Indians, like Gandhi, will certainly receive it with humility, even though they do not accept it all. Others may regard it as only another example of Western contempt that sees no good in India—nor any ill in the West. For Miss Mayo appears to have no disquiet about her native land, and Indians resent that sort of attitude and usually seek to reply with the "tu quoque." Thus, when Westerners arraign them for child marriage, they reply "How about spinsters?"—for India knows none of them. They contend, with absolute logic to themselves, that from the point of view of unsentimental "Mother Nature," who is interested only in the perpetuation of the species, it is no worse for women to bear children badly, even though many die or grow up weaklings, than to bear none at all. The West, they say, should clean its own house as well as tell them where theirs is dirty. Miss Mayo appears to have sought to forestall this prospective antipathy by quoting as many Indians as possible on the subjects she discusses, but her sense of tact does not seem to have extended much farther. Inappropriate as tact may seem to her in the face of such suffering as she saw, it seems to this reviewer at least that a touch of it here and there—persuasion added to abuse—might have helped her cause. In any case it hardly seems advisable to threaten India that the League of Nations, regarding her as a menace to international health, will force her to clean up. Does she actually think that this method would, or could, work? But perhaps I overestimate the importance she meant to attach to that rather casual suggestion. It may be only an excuse for presenting to the world a book which she clearly wrote to relieve the inner revulsion she was experiencing.

W. NORMAN BROWN

"Old Charlie"

Riata and Spurs. By Charles A. Siringo. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

FORTY-ONE years ago the butcher boys of American trains were peddling a paper-backed autobiography entitled "A Texas Cow Boy, or Fifteen Years on the Hurricane Deck of a Spanish Pony." It went at two-bits, and "nearly a million copies were sold" before it became a rare item in Western Americana. The author of it, Charles A. Siringo, signed himself "An Old Stove Up Cow Puncher." He must not have been so very much stove up, however, for after he had written the book he spent thirty years more in the saddle, interspersing his rides with writing an account of his career as "cowboy detective" and a history of "Billy the Kid" and with sticking together on paper a handful of cowboy songs, all of which were privately printed. And now "Old Charlie" Siringo has recast and drawn together all the "far-stretched" experiences of his extraordinary career, and the great and respectable publishing house of Boston that publishes Ralph Waldo Emerson has issued them in a handsome volume. Cowboy literature has attained to respectability.

The new book, "Riata and Spurs," is a remarkably faithful and graphic history of perhaps the most representative American cowboy now living—just "a fool cowboy" who never became a cowman, a "waddie" without cares or responsibilities, reckless, as tough as rawhide, as honest as daylight, as ingenuous as an old saddle horse, as wise as the rattle-bearing serpent of the plains. Born on the Texas coast, he was, in 1867, at the age of eleven, "chousing" longhorns and snaring mustangs. This was the year when the great Chisholm Trail from Texas to Kansas opened, and in the succeeding decades Charlie Siringo took part in about every phase of range experience there was to take part in.

He was working for the noted "Shanghai" Pierce when Pierce contracted 100,000 Texas bulls to the Cuban government—and the meat proved too tough for the soldiers to eat. He was in camp when "Old Shang" boomed out with prophetic voice: "Boys, the day is coming when every man will have to eat his own meat." At a time when tens of thousands of cattle were being slaughtered for their hides and tallow he helped keep the establishment of one "packer" supplied with stray beef. He skinned cattle in winters when from hundreds of miles north they drifted to the coast as thick as buffaloes in Kansas and died like sheep, while cowmen took six-shooter measures to prevent promiscuous mavericking. He was on the trail when cowhands could not pull off their wet boots for two weeks at a time.

He was in Tascosa, Texas, and Dodge City, Kansas, when they were rollicky and wild with buffalo skinners and trail drivers. He knew John Chisum, about whose enormous cattle thefts he tells the truth, and Clay Allison of the Washita, and Sam Bass, and Charlie Goodnight, and many another vivid figure of the old West. There was a Lincoln County War down in New Mexico in which "Billy the Kid" led one gang of warriors, and Siringo trailed him—yet seems to have been glad when he broke out of jail. He fought a prairie fire on the boundless L X range. Dressed in high-heeled boots and spurs, he ran a restaurant and sold cigars to the hordes of "boomers" that rushed into Oklahoma when the Indian lands were opened for settlement. Cassidy and his "Wild Bunch" made Jackson's Hole in Wyoming as notorious as the Osage Hills, and Siringo spurred a thousand miles after some of the gang, celebrating the end of the chase by shooting—"just for fun"—the top off a stage coach in which he was riding. Under an assumed name, he played detective with the striking coal miners at the Coeur d'Alene in Idaho; he tossed his riata over the head of a gold thief in Alaska; he rounded up an express robber in Mexico.

"Riata and Spurs" is not only a history of facts; it is a revelation of character, an interpretation of the psychology of the always interesting old-time cowboy. It is saturated with humor. Above all, it is written without the least strain for effect or the least playing up of the most adventuresome and hazardous work that any American frontier has known.

J. FRANK DOBIE

Hamsun's Rival

Giants in the Earth. By O. E. Rölvaag. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

THIS seems to me much the fullest, finest, and most powerful novel that has been written about pioneer life in America. It opens in the seventies with a small caravan—a Norwegian family—pushing its way painfully and uncertainly through the high prairie grass of South Dakota. There is no trail, and no human being is in sight; there are no birds, no trees. There are only the loneliness of the plain, the splendor of the sunset, the terror of the dusk. We enter the frightened heart of Beret, the wife and mother, who has left the fjords and hills of her beloved Norway blindly to follow her husband, Per Hansa. We go breathlessly with Per Hansa when he steals away from camp in the moonlight, searching for a sign of the families that have just gone before him.

The story is of the home-founding. To Per Hansa it seems apparent that they have come into the kingdom. He sees the rich black earth, so eager for the seed, he watches the sun ride across the wide sky every day. He sings and shouts, works from daylight until after dusk, glories in the splendid new life. But his lovely and sensitive young wife, who had loved Per Hansa madly in Norway, cannot understand this

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flat country, she cannot believe that God ever meant His people to live in such a place. It is sinister, and there is nothing to hide behind.

This is no light book to while away a summer hour. Rölvaag has written it from the rich and tragic experiences of the life he knows. It is intensely local, yet it is universal. Men have struggled in that way with the land in all places since the world began. Hamsun or the great Nexö might have told the story more adroitly, especially some of the latter parts, and they might have stressed the romantic note. But Rölvaag has done his work well. He has tenderness and power, and he has a rollicking gaiety of spirit at times.

In the gorgeous opening chapters there is the joy of a great discovery, the true feeling of a green and golden land in the glory of its best days. As the tale progresses and the land and sky of winter seem to unite to smite the tiny figures who would disturb the solitude, the somber note recurs with increasing frequency. Anyone who has lived on the plains knows that that is the life and that here is the story. And anyone who has lived there knows Beret and Per Hansa. We may wish desperately that Rölvaag could have ended his tale in triumph and satisfaction, as Hamsun ended "Growth of the Soil." But no; Rölvaag had to stand close to the facts and the truth. It is another story.

Rölvaag is a plain man with no superficial smartness. He writes like one completely isolated from the literary and sales chatter of the market-place. He is fifty years old and he has written several novels, but this is the first one to be translated into English. He was once a fisherman at Lofoten, and he came to this country as a young man. He wrote in Norwegian and his books were first published in this country and read by the Norwegians who make up such a large proportion of the population of Minnesota and the Dakotas. It is curious, this man, an American citizen, writing his books about America in a foreign tongue. He has little in common with other American novelists, but much in common with the best writers of Norway. He has at times that light, tender, caressing way of considering his characters that Hamsun often gives us, notably in "Benoni." And in his own way he knows a thing or two about handling an incident. Undoubtedly he has his own special cleverness, along with his superb feeling for the beautiful and the tragic aspects of life. But, more important than that, he is an authentic voice for the inarticulate thousands of plains-dwellers of the old time.

WALTER VOGDES

Government for Workers

The Worker Looks at Government. **By Arthur Calhoun. International Publishers. $1.60.**

SOME fifteen years ago the workers' education movement in England found itself sorely in need of textbooks. Workers with a decided working-class psychology could not study economics, history, imperialism, or economic geography from the textbooks written for university students. The Plebs League was organized to supply working-class education and workers' textbooks. In the United States workers' education has been extremely slow to develop. Brookwood Labor College has been and is one of the outstanding features of the movement. "The Worker Looks at Government" is one of the first textbooks to come out of the discussions and lectures at Brookwood.

In a vivid and challenging fashion Mr. Calhoun, who is an instructor at Brookwood, discusses the nature of government, the problem of law-making, the development of the judicial power, the problem of the Supreme Court, and the attitude of government and labor. Mr. Calhoun's criticism of governmental functions is essentially that of the Marxian scholar. He analyzes our present system of representation as one of economic interests despite the artificial geographic divisions. "Steel" representatives, "oil" representatives, "coal" representatives make our system virtually a soviet system sans the representation of the workers, "though the workers might see this if their eyes were open; but the delusion of grandeur envisaged not in themselves but in the persons of the captains of industry and finance, who are able to strut so grandly and spend so lavishly, interferes with a realistic reaction toward conditions."

The unique feature of the book and undoubtedly a real contribution to labor literature is the series of provocative questions to be found at the end of each chapter. These questions should be incorporated in the fashionable questionnaires of knowledge. Why do boards of education object to teachers joining unions, while they do not object to their joining rotary clubs or chambers of commerce? Account for the inconsistency of the Supreme Court on the matter of enforcement of the Constitution. How does the idea of proportional representation differ from the soviet idea? If the worker looking at government can answer these questions he is above the intelligence of the tired tabloid reader swaying to and fro in the subway.

THERESA WOLFSON

Fifty Years Behind

American Labor and American Democracy. By William English Walling. Harper and Brothers. $3.

THE apparent aim of this book is to explain to the world at large the why and wherefore of the American Federation of Labor. Its author should be well equipped for the job, since he was the friend and adviser of the late Samuel Gompers and is still very much at home in the federation's headquarters at Washington. His book may indeed be regarded as a semi-official statement of the aims, methods, and ideals of the A. F. of L. Having long felt the need of such a statement, I sat down to this one with keen interest. The interest soon faded, to be replaced with despair as chapter after chapter disclosed complete absence of arrangement and endless repetitions, balanced by unpardonable omissions and masses of dull and generally pointless quotations.

Perhaps it is not fair to blame Mr. Walling. The confusion arises from his subject, for the A. F. of L. is characterized by humbug, inertia, and drift, and Mr. Walling, in attempting to analyze the policy of the federation and, at the same time, show that it is progressive, energetic, and clear-sighted, is faced with a hopeless task. Mr. Walling is well aware that European labor leaders and American intellectuals have criticized the American labor movement as backward. He is anxious to rebut this charge and to prove that the American movement is as well-developed as that of any other nation. He argues that the federation is essentially progressive and American. Neither Socialist nor Capitalist, it aspires to be Labor and democratic. It has developed along individual lines, widely separate from those of European labor, and, he hints, the fewer ideas it imports the better.

The first part of the book is devoted to a description of the methods by which the A. F. of L. has sought to acquire political power. It has always avoided, quite rightly in the view of Mr. Walling, attempts to form a Labor Party. The two existing parties have no dividing line worth mentioning so far as principles are concerned, but "the entire machinery of elections, legislation, and the administration tends to perpetuate not only the two-party system but the two existing parties." Therefore, argues Mr. Walling, the realistic method for Labor to adopt is the "non-partisan" method of working through both political parties. By making use of the opportunities afforded by the primaries Labor can insure that both candidates at an election are favorable to its aims. Ultimately, it hopes to create a progressive bloc, with members on both sides of Congress, strong enough to exercise control of legislation.

Mr. Walling would have us believe that the A. F. of L. has, in the past twenty years, succeeded, by non-partisan methods, in placing on the statute books an imposing body of legislation,

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including the Clayton Act, the Immigration Acts, and the Seaman's Act. He mentions large numbers of Congressmen in recent congresses who have been pledged to support labor policies and oppose anti-labor legislation. One is duly impressed until one remembers that in spite of these victories the right to strike, the elementary objective of a trade-union movement, is hedged about by endless legal restrictions.

This is a matter on which Mr. Walling does not choose to dwell. There are others. One scarcely realizes, after reading this book, that the A. F. of L. is still largely an aristocracy of skilled workers whose importance is rapidly declining in these later stages of the industrial revolution. He does not mention the millions of workers, in the most flourishing industries in America, whom the A. F. of L. has hardly attempted to organize. Nor does he make any reference to the several strong unions, some of which have made remarkable progress, outside the orbit of the A. F. of L.

An apt comparison, though one Mr. Walling would resent, might be made between the American trade unions today and the British movement of the 1860's. The latter was composed almost entirely of skilled mechanics organized on a craft basis; its energies were devoted to obtaining an assured legal status for trade unions; and it was beginning to experiment with political action, working chiefly through the Liberal Party. The suggestion that the A. F. of L. is fifty years or so behind the times is thus not without foundation. The American worker, trade unionist or otherwise, has one tremendous advantage, however, over his more highly organized European comrade. His real wages are very much higher. This advantage leading lights of the A. F. of L. complacently credit to the superior industrial and political methods of their own organization. And, while prosperity lasts, there is nothing to prevent them from sitting tight and inactive upon their comfortable pedestals, sleepily applauding the energies of Mr. Walling in exhibiting them to the world as monuments of American idealism.

KEITH HUTCHISON

Before the War

From Bismarck to the World War. By Erich Brandenburg. Oxford University Press. $7.

German World Policy. By O. Hammann. Alfred A. Knopf. $4.

IN Germany the situation must be peculiarly painful for the writers of history. At one and the same time there exist the duty of absolving Germany from the war guilt and the desire to condemn one or another pre-war authority—party or individual—for Germany's part in bringing on the conflict. Otto Hammann, who thinks Germany was "encircled" by her enemies, is almost impatient with the blunders of the Kaiser, who lost that friendship which Bismarck had successfully cultivated in England. Mr. Hammann did long service in the Press Bureau of the Wilhelmstrasse. He knew the Iron Chancellor, Caprivi, Bülow, as well as the more recent architects of German *grosse Politik*. He has an intimate acquaintance with the diplomatic correspondence of many decades. Erich Brandenburg, whose volume is among the best accounts of German pre-war diplomacy, is somewhat more acidulous than Mr. Hammann in denouncing the *Dummheit* of German diplomats. His volume, like many another of its type, is sound and careful and based on a wide knowledge of the documentary evidence.

However painlessly Mr. Brandenburg guides the reader through an intricate jungle of diplomatic remains, he rarely brings him forth into the sunlight of sound conclusions. Even those who regard favorably demands for Austro-German unification will deny the connection between the causes of the World War and the righteousness of unification sentiment. "Nationality" is hardly the word in which to epitomize the fundamental causes. In this contribution to the inquest Mr. Brandenburg denounces as the arch-fiends of 1914 Izvolski and Poincaré. Here he will meet readier agreement than in his harshness toward the blundering Grey. And the revisionists will chorus with delight (they did immediately on the appearance of the German edition of the book) on reading the following:

> Our policy was, in fact, too anxious and peace-loving. . . . The French wished to recover Alsace-Lorraine. . . . The Russians wished to open the way to the Straits and to the control of the Balkans. . . . It was they, not Germany, who wished for conquests. . . . Unfortunately we possessed no statesman who was competent to deal with these clever and unscrupulous diplomatists. Austria's rashness and Germany's timid consideration for her last ally gave them the opportunity they wanted. . . .

Some day we shall realize that whoever killed the bird of peace, the funeral had begun forty-four years before the murder. Then the coroners will go back to history.

HERBERT SOLOW

Books in Brief

A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, with Selections from the Journals, Sermons, and Correspondence of Laurence Sterne. Edited with an Introduction by Wilbur L. Cross. *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy.* By Laurence Sterne. Introduction by Wilbur L. Cross. *The Travels of Marco Polo.* Revised from Marsden's Translation and edited with Introduction by Manuel Komroff. *The Dialogues of Plato.* Selections from the Translation of Benjamin Jowett. Edited with an Introduction by William Chase Greene. *The Physiology of Taste.* By Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin. Foreword by Frank Crowninshield. *The Complete Poems of François Villon.* Translated by John Heron Lepper. Including the texts of John Tayne and others. Boni and Liveright. The Black and Gold Library. $3.50 each.

Six volumes of a beautiful and useful series which is to include translations of Apuleius, Saint Augustine, Brantôme, Castiglione, Machiavelli, Terence, the Greek Romances, Aristophanes, Catullus, and others. The octavo size of the volumes will permit the presentation of more material than is usually to be found in the items of a popular series; and the glossy black and gold binding will provide a permanently desirable shelf for scholars and lovers of good books. Few publishing enterprises have been more worthy of praise.

Brother Saul. By Donn Byrne. The Century Company. $2.50.

The pace and color and vigor of the early chapters of this novel are exceptional; the author has taken a familiar story and recreated an era. After Saul's memorable conversion, the drama falls inevitably into a more subdued key and the second half of the story suffers by comparison with what has gone before. Conceding that, however, it still remains a richly wrought and satisfying performance.

Mattock. By James Stevens. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Mr. Stevens adroitly lays bare the mind and emotions of a soldier, but the clinic is not unqualifiedly rewarding to the reader. One feels that the same results could have been secured by more imaginative means. The recital occasionally crosses the borderline into the tedious, so that one is tempted to suggest—in place of "Mattock"—a rereading of Ralph Hale Mottram's "Spanish Farm" trilogy.

The Poilus. By Joseph Delteil. Translated from the French by Jacques Leclercq. Minton, Balch and Company. $3.

The author attempts to present the World War through a series of the experiences and impressions of an ordinary soldier. His success is indifferent, because in spite of occasional telling description, his obvious effort to express himself originally results not in more vivid pictures but merely in fantastic prose. Nor does he add to our knowledge of the life or mind of the French peasant, who, in 1914-1918, returned to the most primitive savagery under compulsion of the most modern ideals.

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International Relations Section

The Eastern Edge of Europe

By LOUIS E. VAN NORMAN

TO understand what is happening in Rumania just now it is necessary to get a picture of general reconstruction politics in Southeastern Europe. This does not mean party politics in Rumania alone. All of the new independent units born of the World War face the same general problems, with only local modifying factors. The underlying factors with which political leaders must deal are the same in each case. Cultural, political, and economic levels, languages, legal codes, and religious creeds, not to forget railroad systems, each one differing in purpose and structure from all of the others, must be made uniform and efficient to serve a new modern state. Cutting across these are differing financial and commercial systems to be realigned. Finally there have been all sorts of administrative backgrounds and widely differing methods of official procedure to be welded into one. There is a serious lack of trained public servants for the work to be done.

But the most prolific source of trouble in all of these new nations is yet to be mentioned. It is the belief that the oldest unit in Rumania is the rightful center of the new combination and that it must absorb the new additions rather than acknowledge that a new unit has been born. As for these new lands, they argue that they should be consulted in the formulation of the reconstituted fatherland. We came into the new union, they say, by voluntary acts of our own and we demand our rightful share in the building of the Rumania of the future. There you have the whole story of intransigence in Transylvania and Bessarabia.

The Rumanian peasant, on the whole, is satisfied. He has the land and there is practically no danger of bolshevism with him. "I believe in private property because I've got some"—is his political, economic, and social philosophy. The partitioning of the land was of course an act of justice, but it was also a policy of insurance against bolshevism.

The political parties in Rumania in opposition to the Liberals have all been built up on what have been largely sectional ideas. The Transylvanians were so long in opposition to the government (alien and hostile for nearly a thousand years) that they found it difficult to accustom themselves to an agreement with a government of their own race. Moreover, in spite of their sufferings and the war, the peoples of Transylvania and Bessarabia do remember and are still under the impress, to a certain extent, of the old German-Austrian and Russian ideas, and they have not found it easy to accept the French influence which has always been so dominant in the old Rumanian kingdom.

Since the Bratianus stepped aside from power in March, 1926, Italian influence has been growing in Rumania. General Averescu, Premier until a few weeks ago, is married to an Italian wife, and the increasing popularity of Italian ideas during his premiership was remarkable. Italy loaned money to Rumania. The press of Bucharest applauded "Rumanian solidarity with Italian policy." We have Italy's difference with Jugoslavia over the Albanian puzzle, and there are those not only in Berlin, but in Bucharest and Belgrade and Rome, who claim that the replacing of France by Italy in the thoughts and policies of the Southeast of Europe has seriously impaired the Little Entente. Correctly or not, these observers believe that, if Rumania is detached from her partnership with Jugoslavia and Czecho-Slovakia, the former will not only lose a valuable partner, but Italy's influence will be greatly strengthened in dealings with Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey.

Averescu's premiership lasted just a few days more than fourteen months—from the middle of March, 1926, to the end of May, 1927. Powerful political party influence at home and lack of success in obtaining foreign loans were probably the chief causes of the fall of his government. The illness of King Ferdinand (which would now seem to be about to terminate fatally) has apparently convinced the real rulers of the kingdom that it would be well to attempt to harmonize the opposition parties and instal at Bucharest a coalition government in which the principal elements of the opposition would be represented. On June 7, therefore, King Ferdinand called upon Prince Stirbey, to form a government, a brother-in-law of the Bratianus, and a friend of Queen Marie. But Stirbey was unable to gain the cooperation of the powerful Peasant Party, and on June 21 King Ferdinand called back Bratianu to the premiership as the only man able to form a stable government, at least until the coming elections.

This large political situation has a greater part to play than is easily apparent in what seems like only a rather melodramatic clash of personalities which the newspapers are now reporting daily to us from Rumania. Bessarabia is probably the new Rumania's most difficult problem. Even to many Rumanians of the old kingdom this fertile, fascinating land is merely a name. It is about the size of our own state of South Carolina and its population numbers approximately three and a half million.

Very few Rumanians and scarcely any foreigners at all ever visit Bessarabia. When I proposed to take an automobile trip through that mysterious land I was strongly urged against such an expedition. There were no railroads, and as for motor roads my well-wishers assured me that such things did not exist. However, in the month of May, accompanied by an English-speaking Rumanian friend, I made a three weeks' tour.

Bessarabia has amazingly fertile soil. Its fruit orchards have been famous for more than a century. Its grain, fish, and caviar are known far and wide. It is literally a sun-burned land, however, and the agonizing dust in summer and appalling mud in winter make travel very difficult. In spite of the dryness we were much impressed by the beautiful gardens and orchards of all sorts of fruit in profusion: prunes, apples, cherries, pears, apricots, and peaches of a most excellent flavor, although not large. The fruit of the province has always been famous. For nearly a century Bessarabia was the fruit orchard of the Russian Empire. We could also see that the walnut groves, for which Bessarabia is famous, were flourishing. Everywhere the need for water was evident. Such little irrigation as is practiced is by windmills—or buckets carried by hand. Apparently there is no fuel in Bessarabia—wood, coal, or oil. Because of this lack the industrial possibilities of the country are limited. There are a few mills and factories making leather, soap, paper, and pottery, and we saw one beet-sugar plant in operation. But grain everywhere (particularly corn and wheat), in spite of the heat, was flourishing.

For almost unnumbered centuries the Bessarabian

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steppe, known as the Bugeac, was the battleground of the Aryan and Turanian races. All of the invaders of Europe crossed here. Now all is changed, and on both sides of the river Dniester the famous Black Earth region is no longer the home of fighting men or nomads, but of peaceful, hard-working farmers. Of Bessarabia's 3,500,000 people, more than 2,500,000 are Rumanian, but besides these there is a medley of races, tongues, and religions. Imagine a harmonious family made up of Rumanians, Russians, Poles, Serbians, Bulgarians, Germans, English, Swedes, Swiss, French, Greeks, Americans, Tartars, Jews, Gipsies, Turks, and a number of uncouth racial mixtures. Among the faiths represented are Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Mennonites, Separatists, Georgians, Lutherans, Calvinists, Pietists, and Mohammedans.

Chisinau (known to the Russian as Kishineff), the capital, is connected with Bucharest by a fairly good sleeping-car service. In 1812 when the Russians took over Bessarabia, Chisinau was a mud village of some 5,000 inhabitants. Today it has a population nearly sixty times as great, more than half being of the Jewish race. It is an uneven, dingy, sprawly city, very dirty in spots and very clean in others, with plenty of shade trees, and only one wide street —the Alexandrovskaya. Chisinau has deteriorated sadly since the days when the old landed proprietors came there to do their banking. It was then a rather lively and brilliant town. Since the parceling-out of the land, however, the peasant farmers have built up little trading centers of their own all over the province, and they do not go to Chisinau any more. It still smacks of Russia—the Alexandrovskaya, the long time spent at meals, the heavy eating, the samovar, the everlasting tea-drinking and cigarette smoking, the turning of night into day. But the mass of the population gossips in the Moldavian—or Rumanian—tongue.

As we motored over the execrable roads along the Dniester, which separates Bessarabia from the Russian provinces that make up the Ukraine, we could see the Bolshevik sentinels on the other side. We also noted the fact that, even at that early part of the season, the grain was in a sad way from the drought. From Chisinau to Tighina (known to the Russians as Bender) we made our trip in a gasoline-driven hand-car, reaching the latter place just in time to witness the "normalizing" of the last stretch of Russian wide-gauge railroad track. Over a distance of some forty miles, three thousand soldiers and eight hundred workmen lifted up one rail and replaced it nine centimeters (approximately three inches) nearer to the other, while an Orthodox priest blessed each kilometer of the road as it was completed. The Rumanians are reconstructing all of the Bessarabian lines as well as they can, with limited capital.

The Rumanians in Bessarabia are intensely patriotic. They have had to fight for their Rumanianism so long that it has become almost a religion with them. On the second morning of our stay in Tighina I was awakened very early by childish voices singing. Presently there was a knock and in response to my invitation two children in the Rumanian national costume—a boy and a girl, each about eight years old—marched into my room. The boy bowed with much dignity. "Octavianu," he announced, introducing himself. The girl curtsied and presented herself as "Florica." Then they stood at military "attention," and sang in mellow treble, for my delectation, several stirring patriotic songs. "We always begin the day this way," was the boy's explanation, "and we thought you might like to hear us."

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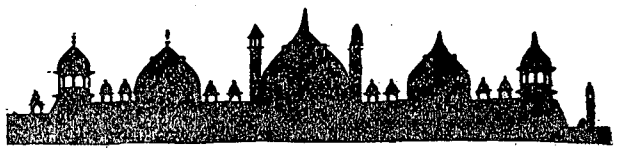

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